

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of configuring a thin client computing device for operation in a network, comprising:
  - creating configuration data for the thin client computing device, the configuration data including network settings for the thin client computing device to operate in the network;
  - storing the configuration data on a portable media device;
  - connecting the portable media device to the thin client computing device; and
  - detecting, by the thin client computing device, the portable media device connected thereto; and

executing by the thin client computing device a configuration program to automatically configure the thin client computing device using the configuration data stored on the portable media device.
2. A method as in claim 1, wherein the steps of creating and storing configuration data are performed on a computer, and the step of creating includes prompting a user, through a user interface of the computer, to create network settings for the thin client computing device.
3. A method as in claim 2, wherein the step of creating further includes generating an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file containing the network settings for the thin client computing device, and wherein the step of storing stores the XML file on the portable media device.
4. A method as in claim 2, wherein the step of creating configuration data includes generating, by computer, default values for selected network settings.
5. A method as in claim 4, wherein the step of generating default values includes invoking an application program interface (API) of an operating system of the initiating computer to generate the default values for the selected network settings.

6. A method as in claim 2, wherein the network is a wireless network, and the step of creating network settings includes generating a security key for the wireless network.

7. A method as in claim 2, further including the step of writing by the thin client computing device into the portable media device a configuration log file containing settings of the thin client computing device.

8. A method as in claim 7, further including the steps of:  
detecting, by the computer, reconnection of the portable media device to the computer;  
and  
retrieving, by the computer from the portable media device, the configuration log file written by the thin client computing device.

9. A method as in claim 2, wherein the step of creating network settings includes receiving network setting data entered by the user.

10. A method as in claim 1, wherein the portable media device is a universal serial bus (USB) flash drive.

11. A method as in claim 1, wherein the portable media device is a flash memory card.

12. A method as in claim 1, further including the steps of signaling by the thin client computing device a completion of configuration operation after the thin client computing device is configured using the configuration data stored on the portable media device.

13. A method as in claim 12, wherein the step of signaling includes flashing a light-emitting diode (LED) on the thin client computing device.

14. A method as in claim 12, wherein the step of signaling includes displaying a message on a liquid crystal display (LCD) screen of the thin client computing device.

15. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for execution on a thin client computing device for performing steps of:

detecting connection of a portable media device to the thin client computing device, the portable media device containing configuration data including network settings for the thin client computing device; and

automatically configuring the thin client computing device for operation in a network using the network settings contained in the portable media device.

16. A computer-readable medium as in claim 15, wherein the step of automatically configuring includes recognizing that the portable media device contains network settings, and invoking a configuration program to implement the network settings in the computing device.

17. A computer-readable medium as in claim 15, having further computer-executable instructions for performing the step of writing settings configured on the thin client computing device into the portable media device.

18. A computer-readable medium as in claim 15, having further computer-executable instructions for performing the step of signaling a completion of configuration of the thin client computing device using the configuration data on the portable media device.

19. A computer-readable medium as in claim 15, wherein the portable media device is a universal serial bus (USB) flash drive.

20. A computer-readable medium as in claim 15, wherein the portable media device is a flash memory card.

21. A thin client computing device comprising:  
a microprocessor circuit;  
a media port for receiving a portable media device; and  
a memory containing computer-executable instructions for execution by the microprocessor circuit for detecting connection of a portable media device to the media port, the portable media device containing configuration data including network settings for the thin client computing device; and automatically configuring the thin client computing device for operation in a network using the network settings contained in the portable media device.

22. A thin client computing device as in claim 21, wherein the memory contains computer-executable instructions for execution by the microprocessor circuit for recognizing that the portable media device contains network settings, and invoking a configuration program to implement the network settings in the thin client computing device.

23. A thin client computing device as in claim 21, wherein the memory contains computer-executable instructions for execution by the microprocessor circuit for writing settings configured on the thin client computing device into the portable media device.

24. A thin client computing device as in claim 21, wherein the media port is a USB port.

25. A thin client computing device as in claim 21, wherein the media port is a flash card slot.

26. A thin client computing device as in claim 21, further comprising a signaling device, wherein the memory contains computer-executable instructions executable by the microprocessor circuit to operate the signaling device to indicate completion of a configuration operation using the configuration data on the portable media device.

27. A thin client computing device as in claim 26, wherein the signaling device includes a light emitting diode (LED).

28. A thin client computing device as in claim 26, wherein the signaling device includes a liquid crystal display (LCD) screen.